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Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4343rd meeting

Friday, 29 June 2001, 12.40 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
Members:	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Mali	Mr. Maiga
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Ms. Lee
	Tunisia	Mr. Mejdoub
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchinsky
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Hume

Agenda

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the month of June 2001

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01-43298 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the month of June 2001

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

This is the first meeting of the Security Council being held in public to take into account an assessment and evaluation of its work during the preceding month. This is an occasion on which I believe I should like to pay a tribute to my colleagues in the Council who decided to hold this public meeting in order to share our thoughts, views and ideas about how the Council works, particularly how it works during a very busy month, and how we should look ahead to the future with regard to the Council.

This meeting, of course, is restricted to contributions by the 15 members of the Council, but it is my fervent hope and wish that in the future there will be an opportunity for non-Council members to join us in this process.

We are privileged to have the Secretary-General with us this morning. Today was a momentous day, with the General Assembly taking action on his reappointment to a second term. I would like to take this opportunity at this formal meeting of the Security Council to convey on behalf of all my Council colleagues our deep appreciation for the services he has provided to the world body and for his continued commitment to the objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We look forward in the Council to working closely with him in the coming years, and we believe that under his leadership the Organization will achieve even greater glory.

The Security Council renews its trust in Secretary-General Kofi Annan to carry forward the United Nations mission of peace and security.

It has been a very difficult month for my presidency, for Bangladesh, the colleagues on my team. It has been very busy, and unexpectedly new items and issues came up that took up our time. But let me say also that quite a lot was achieved in this month, particularly in discussing the major areas of conflict of the world. We also devoted a day-long debate to the prevention of armed conflict, discussing the first-ever report of the Secretary-General on the subject. I must say that this was a very comprehensive report, touching on all aspects of conflict prevention in a broader perspective.

And we believe that this subject, as it is at the heart of the Council's primary responsibilities, will receive our attention in the Council, as well as in the other organs and organizations of the United Nations. The General Assembly has scheduled a debate on 12 and 13 July on this subject, perhaps in response to the Security Council debate under the presidency of the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh. We believe there is a desire among the members Council to adopt a resolution on that subject as far as the competence of the Security Council is concerned. So, I have been advised that the Bangladesh delegation is preparing one and will be circulating it for adoption, very soon hopefully, under the Chinese presidency.

I am not going to recount what happened during the month but let me take up one or two issues that I believe may be useful for the round of discussion.

One aspect that came up time and again in our deliberations is how decisions are translated into action. We have to ensure that the Secretary-General is given the human, material, and financial resources to implement our decisions. We have to reflect on how the follow-up of issues, not as routine calendar events, but as conscious policy decisions, are to be pursued in a proactive manner. What we have found is that, in view of the issuance of a number of reports during the month and of the required extension of the mandates of various peacekeeping operations, the Council is somewhat bound by the issuing of these reports. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but sometimes the Council does not consciously take up issues that need our attention and need a very thorough, in-depth discussion in the Council. So, we believe that subsequent presidencies will be able to give that opportunity to the Council, to give some thought to the issues that are not constrained or bound by the submission of a report or the extension of a mandate.

We also found a proactive attitude or the intention to be proactive on the part of the Security Council in the initiative of sending out missions to conflict areas. In the past year, useful missions were the mission to

the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the mission to Kosovo. This month followed that trend. We believe that this kind of proactive attitude on the part of the Council through its missions to the conflict areas have found considerable support, even outside the Council, and we believe this activity should be continued. In those cases, the Council has generated major decisions by the Organization with regard to the conflict areas. I have in mind the mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which engaged in real negotiations with the parties concerned in the region. The mission came up with very positive and forward-looking recommendations, and the Council acted on those recommendations. We believe we achieved a very good outcome of the deliberations on that mission's report.

So, these are the issues that work well. This month we adopted resolution 1353 (2001) on cooperation with troop-contributing countries. I think this is a major operational resolution by the Security Council, and streamlines many of the deliberations that used to go on between the troop-contributing countries, the Council itself, and the Secretariat. This trilateral relationship has been further refined, strengthened, and re-made, I think, to the satisfaction of the troop-contributing countries, in particular. We believe that is a major area to which the Council has contributed. I would encourage the Council in the future to also give its attention to some of these operational areas, which is necessary — apart from addressing the major responsibilities — because refining those areas would really help the Council and the mission of the Council greatly.

The Secretary-General has reported at some length in his recent report on the Brahimi report implementation, addressing the problems concerning civilian components in peace operations, with the need of larger and wider civilian components in the missions, such as the United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC)and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). The Council needs to bring that issue into focus. We wish to hear the views of the Council members today or in subsequent session on this topic.

Finally, the Council's relations with the press, the media and the public need specific attention. We should make an effort to see that the Council's work receives the attention of the outside world. The possibility of having a spokesperson of the Security Council President was discussed informally at the retreat. You, Mr. Secretary-General, suggested that and, because of the rotating presidency, the option needs to be examined further. I took up that idea seriously with the Department of Public Information (DPI), and with your spokesperson, Mr. Secretary-General. I would leave it to the subsequent presidencies to address that matter, but what we did this month was arrange that every morning, the representative of the spokesperson of the Secretary-General would come and meet with us and work out the day's program, the issues, and how the Council sees the issues as they emerge that day. I am told that a five-minute meeting every morning helped the spokesperson's office, as well as the media representative, because he or she is the main conduit between the Council and the media as a whole. That worked well and we encourage successive presidencies to follow that practice and build upon it for the greater advantage of the Security Council.

With the strong support of the Council, we also took considerable steps regarding communicating the decisions and statements of the Council to the parties concerned. The Council has agreed to issue a note on that subject, identifying the way and the manner in which such communications should take place. I believe this is an improvement in the working methods of the Security Council, and we are very happy and proud that all of us could join in that decision.

Those are the initial thoughts I wanted to share with all of you and I would now like to open the floor for your comments.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Let me commend you for the manner in which you have conducted the presidency during this month, including the unprecedented degree of openness, of which our meeting here today is an illustration. For non-permanent members in particular, openness and transparency in the way the Security Council conducts its business is of pivotal importance. We welcome the initiatives you have taken in this regard.

In particular, we emphasize the usefulness of open briefings, allowing the full United Nations membership better and more equal access to information regarding developments in international peace and security and related United Nations operations and assistance efforts. With regard to open meetings, which we support, it is important that we maintain a focussed approach without lengthy

repetitions, while hearing from Member States particularly involved in, or affected by, the issue at hand. Moreover, debriefings from Council missions, et cetera, can often be given by the chair without a mandatory round of Council members' commentary. Above all, our culture should be one of sharing information and viewpoints on an interactive and integrative basis.

In this regard, my delegation had hoped that the important resolution adopted this month on cooperation with troop-contributing countries could have gone further in incorporating proposals and signals put forward by a number of those countries during what we saw as a very useful consultation process. At the same time, we acknowledge that careful consideration is needed for new mechanisms and arrangements. My delegation will continue its efforts to further this process.

In order for the various delegations — whether currently members of the Council or not — to be able to digest information provided and establish positions on what often tend to be issues that are complex in nature, there must be sufficient time between the issuing of reports and the scheduling of meetings to consider issues in a substantive manner. Lately, there have been instances in which documentation was made available only 24 hours prior to consideration by the Security Council. This clearly is not sufficient and must be avoided in the future. For non-members it is especially important that the nature of upcoming meetings be made clear in order to facilitate their participation.

It is paramount that resolutions and statements by the President of the Security Council reach the Governments, groups and individuals for which they are intended. Recent steps taken to transmit the contents of Council action to the parties in conflict must become standard practice. Special representatives of the Secretary-General and other diplomatic channels need to be fully utilized in this regard. Also, the international community at large should, as far as possible, seek to reinforce Council action in conflict areas.

Council missions to conflict areas are important to our work. It is indeed the most direct way of conducting dialogue and impressing the Council's encouragement and/or warnings upon belligerent parties. Furthermore, Council missions — such as those recently carried out to the Great Lakes region and to Kosovo/Belgrade — have proved beneficial in providing Council members with deeper insight and updated information on crisis situations.

Following the mission to the Great Lakes region, the Council, in our view, has arrived at an increasingly common analysis and approach to the conflict concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo based on its underlying causes. Significantly, this was reflected in the balanced and comprehensive resolution adopted on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) earlier this month.

We would also like to thank the Secretary-General's Special Representative Mr. Haekkerup and the Kosovo Force Commander (KFOR) Lieutenant-General Skiaker for facilitating the useful meetings in Kosovo and to thank President Koštunica and Yugoslav authorities for the constructive talks in Belgrade.

We should be ready to consider similar Council missions in the future to other conflict areas.

Let me take this opportunity to again thank your delegation, Mr. President, for its effective facilitation and for having brought to a successful conclusion the initiatives put forward by my delegation this month regarding HIV/AIDS and the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The presidential statement welcoming the successful holding of the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS and encouraging further action to address the problem of HIV/AIDS was, in our view, a timely and appropriate step by the Council.

Likewise, the letter from the President of the Security Council to the Secretary-General inviting further advice for the Council's consideration regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict is intended to bring forward a matter we consider to be of great importance. We welcome our fellow Council members' indicated willingness to jointly pursue this matter further.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to join you in congratulating the Secretary-General on his appointment to a new term.

The President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, let me say that when we decided on this meeting, we also wanted this to be somewhat interactive, so that members would ask questions and

raise issues. That way I think that we will enjoy this meeting, and we will also get some results.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): In addition to your comment, Mr. President, we also have time limits. But I would like first of all to highlight your commitment to making this a more open Council, which was achieved, and your great capacity for work, your leadership of the Mission to Kosovo and also of the process of selecting the Secretary-General.

As for our working methods, I see that much progress was achieved. The drafting of the lists, while still mysterious, has improved. As regards the subjects covered, it was a very busy, very varied, but also a very balanced month. There was also much controversy. I am thinking of yesterday, when the representative of Iraq was quite aggressive with some of us that are not the main actors.

Now I would like to make a few comments in the form of suggestions, addressing myself to you, Mr. President, the other members and all others present. As regards the agenda for consultations, it seemed to me that this month the "other matters" were not being taken up at the end of each meeting. In other words, it was asked if anyone wanted to raise other matters — they were mentioned and then they were put aside. I think it is more interesting — no, in fact, indispensable — that we continue to deal with other matters at the end of the meeting, even if items are mentioned at the beginning, because sometimes we do not have time to call in our experts in time. So let us have the agenda continue to be an agenda.

The other suggestion I have relates to a general omission, of which all of us members were guilty, when we did not decide that the private meeting during which the Secretary-General was selected could have been a meeting that other Members could have attended. I think that we have to leave this suggestion open so that five years hence it can perhaps be taken up. In other words, it could have been a private meeting, but non-members of the Council could have attended without the right to speak.

Finally, I think that it is important to increase the opportunities for the Council to have relationships with other United Nations bodies. During this month, we missed an opportunity to assess the interesting discussion of the Working Group on Security Council reform, where three Members of the Council did participate and found it very interesting. It was quite a striking meeting and reaffirmed our belief that we have to keep channels open.

I would just like to emphasize one of the topics covered there: to whom should the Council be accountable? Accountability is a term that has no precise translation in Spanish. But I was struck by the fact that there have been many requests, demands and claims emanating from Member States that are not members of the Council. What was discussed was the need to change both the content and the form of the report of the Security Council.

So this month we missed an opportunity to explore this topic, and I think that it is something we can cover in the next few months.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I associate myself with the warm words of congratulations to the Secretary-General. We are all looking forward to continuing to support his efforts for the reform of the United Nations. His presence here today confirms his intention to work in the closest way possible with the Security Council.

I would also like to express gratitude to you and to your delegation, Mr. President. You had a very difficult month, filled with events that arose unexpectedly, but, in my view, you coped with your duties very well. Despite all of the difficulties, it was possible both to find solutions to specific problems which could not be postponed — as the resolutions on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and on Western Sahara — and to make further progress in the development of the instruments available to the Security Council. We have already referred to the meetings on the report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of conflict.

All of this was a direct act of implementing the decisions of the Millennium Summit and, unquestionably, I agree that such meetings should be as informal and interactive as possible. They can be useful as we try to draw lessons from the past month and think about how we will be working in the future.

In that connection, I recall the mission to Kosovo and the discussion that took place afterwards. We did not have Macedonia on the agenda, but it was always invisibly present, as were the Balkans as a whole. So I think that the dialogue that we began with the Secretary-General on these issues should be more specific in the months to come. The Security Council

should look at how its relevant resolutions on the Balkans are being implemented.

I share the assessment of the importance of the resolution on cooperation with troop-contributing countries. The activity of the Security Council on the question of United Nations peacekeeping will continue. The report of the Secretary-General on peacekeeping has already been issued, and we consider that the Council must actively support the Secretary-General's efforts to continue to improve the United Nations peacekeeping machinery; but the Security Council itself, of course, must make its own contribution to this work in accordance with its own competencies.

Here I would like to recall that we, of course, also need to follow up the implementation of our decisions. One of the mechanisms which must be useful for our work on peacekeeping so far is not helping us very much. I am referring to the Military Staff Committee. The Security Council has twice already — in resolutions 1327 (2000) and 1353 (2001) — emphasized the need for the study of means to make more active use of the Military Staff Committee in order to strengthen United Nations peacekeeping operations, and we are expecting the Military Staff Committee do respond to the Council's resolutions.

In conclusion, I would like to support Ambassador Valdivieso in saying that for planning our work it is extremely important to stick to the agenda, and that those questions that need to be discussed under "other matters" should be discussed after the planned items on the agenda.

Once again, Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you and the Secretary-General.

Ms. Lee (Singapore): At the outset, may I also express our delegation's words of congratulations to the Secretary-General and assure him of our continued wholehearted support.

Mr. President, we welcome your initiative to conduct a wrap-up session of the work of the Security Council in this chamber. As you yourself noted, previous wrap-up sessions were conducted in the informal consultations, and members of the general membership had no opportunity to listen to what we were saying about the work of the Council. We therefore feel that your initiative testifies to your delegation's dedication to the promotion of transparency in the work of the Council and enhancement of its accountability to the general membership, on whose behalf the Council exercises its functions under the Charter. The Singapore delegation fully supports these very important objectives.

We feel that it is a good exercise to ask ourselves periodically if we have had a positive impact on the issues that arose for the Council's consideration each month; and, if we have not had a positive impact, we think that we should ask ourselves why, try to find out the reasons, identify the steps that the Council can take and the tools that the Council can try to find and use to inject momentum and progress. Also, of course, the whole objective is to draw lessons, where appropriate, so that we can apply them in the future.

From the outset, Mr. President, we note that you had prepared a very full programme. You had even managed to lead a Security Council mission to Kosovo in the middle of the month. Time does not allow me to make an exhaustive review of the work of the Bangladeshi presidency, but I would like to touch on some of the items that we feel are important. Basically, we would like to give our views on where we feel the Council has done well and where we could have done better.

On the substantive issues, let us start with Burundi. We feel that it was right to keep a close watch on the volatile developments in Burundi. As to the statement that you read just this morning, while an important one, we feel that we should have had a more reflective discussion so that we could agree on the steps that the Council should take to bolster the highly fragile peace process in cooperation with the regional organizations and other relevant actors. Therefore, we look forward to further discussion on this issue fairly soon so that we can build on the outlines of our policy on Burundi.

In relation to Western Sahara, it is obvious that discussions on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) was not just a routine affair this month. We feel that this marked a turning point. Here the Council was faced with a difficult choice on this long-standing item on its agenda, and there were deeply held interests and principles that we needed to reconcile. The shared objective, however, which we note was positive — that is to say, that we deliver a clear mandate to the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General — would not unfairly compromise the just

interests of the parties. However, in keeping with the responsibility of the Council as a whole, to exercise due diligence before taking action, we would have preferred to have a fuller discussion in the Council on the terms of the draft resolution to extend MINURSO's mandate. In our view, it also raised the issue of the "Group of Friends" practice and whether we can improve our working methods in this regard.

On the substance of the matter, of course, we will fully support the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara, Mr. James Baker III, over the next five months in their efforts to find a mutually acceptable political solution, including possibly on the basis of the draft framework agreement or any other proposal that may be submitted.

On Kosovo, we found the activities very useful, especially the important stop in Belgrade. It allowed the Council to update itself on the recent developments in Kosovo and the wider region and assess the impact on the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). It is also commendable, Mr. President, that you convened an open debate to enable non-members to express their views on issues that arose out of the mission.

We feel that Kosovo is not yet out of the woods. Many problems of a fundamental nature remain, not least among them, the issue of inter-ethnic reconciliation. There are also differences within the Council of which we need to be aware and that we should bridge. Nevertheless, it should be recalled that Kosovo is a ward of the Security Council and the international community as a whole, and we should not spare any effort to build a consensus within the Council on our policy in Kosovo, of course within the framework of existing Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1244 (1999).

On Afghanistan, while the Council discussed the report and recommendations of the Committee of Experts in an open debate, we feel that there is a need for the Council to follow up on the recommendations of the Committee, and we also hope that there will soon be an opportunity for the Council to engage in a discussion on finding a well-defined long-term and comprehensive strategy on Afghanistan. We fully appreciate that adequate preparation must be made, and intensive consultations have to be undertaken, if such a discussion is to be substantive and useful, but we hope to have such a discussion soon.

In relation to the situation in the Middle East, we appreciate the updates which the Council has received on the efforts of the Secretary-General, particularly in connection with his recent visit to the region. The situation in the Middle East remains delicate, and the Council should continue to remain actively seized of this matter and follow developments there closely.

On Iraq, work on this issue focused on the follow-up to resolution 1352 (2001), which was adopted very early in your presidency, Sir. It was right and timely, we feel, that you responded swiftly to the request of the Russian Federation and convened a public meeting on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait.

The open debate attracted the largest number of speakers from outside the Council this month, demonstrating the importance attached by the international community to the work of the Council on its sanctions policy towards Iraq and the Iraq humanitarian programme.

The work of the Council on this issue, as we all know, is not complete, and we will have informal consultations this afternoon to enable us to further discuss the draft resolution proposed by the United Kingdom. While we are not altogether sure whether we will be able to remove all of the difficulties and reach an agreement, we should recall the statements made by several non-members of the Council suggesting that the Council should not squander the present opportunity to inject greater focus into the Iraq humanitarian programme and address many of the perceived shortcomings of the programme.

Before closing, I should like to make some comments on the issue of the procedures and working methods of the Council. I would like to touch on two significant developments during your presidency that we think will substantially enhance the working methods of the Council.

First, the Council adopted a resolution to enhance cooperation between the Council and troop-contributing countries, which was the result of the good work done by the Council's working group on peacekeeping operations, led by Ambassador Curtis Ward of Jamaica.

Secondly, after an inexplicable hiatus of several months, the working group on documents and procedures met again to consider proposals of the

presidency to improve the working methods of the Council. We congratulate you, Sir, on your delegation's initiative on the note that will be issued that will clarify the procedures to be followed to communicate messages to parties involved in issues discussed by the Council.

In relation to this issue, which Ambassador Valdivieso earlier raised, we recall that he said that he, along with you, Mr. President, and Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom, were members of the troika that made a presentation at a meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on Council reform earlier this month. We recall also that Ambassador Valdivieso suggested that the Council have a briefing on this meeting. We heard that it was a very substantive meeting, and we note that this has not been taken up. We hope that it will be taken up without further delay.

Lastly, I should like to raise the issue of the speakers' list. Members will recall that Ambassador Mahbubani had brought to the attention of the previous presidency a recurrent problem in the Council on the drawing up of the speakers' list. We are grateful to the Bangladeshi presidency for innovating practical improvements to the existing system. At the earlier stage of your presidency, Sir, you made it a point to announce during informal consultations or at Council meetings when the speakers' list would be opened. Later we noted that the announcement was only put in the daily *Journal*, and we appear to have regressed on this issue.

While the initiatives taken under your presidency have enhanced transparency in form, we regret to note that in substance the drawing up of the speakers' list, particularly on certain key issues, has not entirely lost its Byzantine character. We find that the Orwellian principle is still alive and kicking – that is to say, that some members are more equal than others.

If the rules of sovereign equality enshrined in the United Nations Charter were to be strictly applied, the principle of first come, first served should be the primary guide in the drawing up of the speakers' list. We will continue to speak out on this matter as long as the phenomenon is not corrected.

I should like to repeat what we have said before: that while we could accept some degree of inequality on matters of substance in the work of the Council, on matters of procedure there should always be a level playing field, and we will continue to insist on this.

The President: I think that the representative of Singapore raised some very interesting points.

Very quickly, because the Secretary-General has to go to another appointment, let me mention two things.

First, as Minister Lee pointed out, Ambassador Wang Yingfan has already included, an open briefing on Burundi in his draft programme, so that question will be taken up. Bangladesh is also working on an Arria-formula meeting to bring in other non-State actors involved in Burundi to be heard by Council members.

Secondly, on the Working Group on Documentation, if the Council wants to have a second meeting, it has to bring back Bangladesh as the President again, because the last time such a meeting took place was in March 2000, during our presidency, and that was the second time in two years. As the representative of Singapore said, it is inexplicable, but we need to pull ourselves together and have that Working Group meet.

I think that we can have the briefing suggested by Ambassador Valdivieso tomorrow. I think that tomorrow is an available day on Bangladesh's calendar.

In any case, before the Secretary-General leaves, let me take this opportunity to say that today happens to be the last working day for one of our dear colleagues, Ambassador Anund Neewoor, Permanent Representative of Mauritius, who will soon return to Mauritius after completing his tour of duty in New York as his country's Permanent Representative. It is also with great pleasure that I recognize the gracious presence of Mrs. Neewoor among us today, and we convey to her our greetings.

I should like to recall Ambassador Neewoor's excellent work and his contribution to the work of the Security Council as the Permanent Representative of Mauritius over the last six months. First, getting elected to the Council was a difficult job, and then, after getting elected, to settle down and to make a very positive and substantive contribution is a tall order. He has made his country, Mauritius, and all of us proud.

On behalf of the members of the Council and on my own behalf, I wish him and his family all the best in their future endeavours.

Perhaps Ambassador Neewoor would like to make some comments?

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for the very generous and kind sentiments that you have just expressed towards me.

Today I conclude a long journey of 33 years in the foreign service of Mauritius and in the wonderful world of diplomacy. My foreign service career began with the independence of our country in 1968 and ends here, in the Security Council Chamber, where Mauritius is serving its two-year term, having been elected by the General Assembly last fall to a non-permanent seat in the Council.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks and gratitude to my colleagues the Permanent Representatives for the confidence they placed in us in voting us into the Security Council. I have tried my best to live up to this confidence, which has been at the centre of my preoccupations in our participation in the work of the Security Council over the last six months, since we assumed our term here.

I also take this opportunity to warmly thank the close friends, including several members of the Council, who encouraged us and actively assisted us in our bid for a Security Council seat.

The Security Council is an entity that evokes all kinds of imagings around the world — among nations, among peoples, among academics and among students alike. Beyond the known platitude that it is the supreme instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security, it is regarded as the embodiment of hope and justice, not only by nations that feel aggrieved by the actions of other States or face unmanageable internal strife, but by the ordinary people — men, women and children — who are usually the innocent victims and whose lives are shattered by wars and conflicts.

Therefore, Security Council members — permanent and non-permanent alike — bear an awesome responsibility on behalf of all the people of the world. That is why the Members of the United Nations expect all Security Council decisions to be even-handed, fair and just. Members need always to bear in mind that the decisions they take in this Chamber and in the consultation room are the object of scrutiny by the international community as soon as they become public, and that they will be the object of critical study in the future as well, by students of international relations.

We are fully conscious of the complexity of national and international politics and of their dynamics in the Security Council's decision-making process. We believe that, in spite of the constraints, it should be possible for members of the Security Council to work on the basis of certain norms, on which we should not compromise at any time. The basic norms in that regard should be, as I have said, even-handedness, fairness and justice. I have sometimes wished that there was a meditation room somewhere in the corner near the Security Council Chamber, where from time to time, when in doubt, we could go and reflect, individually or collectively, and then begin deliberations in the consultation room.

Before I became a diplomat, I was a teacher, and I may have pontificated a little bit in this, my final statement in the Council. But I have, I hope, done that with the President's indulgence. I hope that what I have said contains a little bit of material to reflect on.

For me, it has been a wonderful experience to work in the Security Council together with colleagues who are the top diplomats of their respective countries. In the Council, we have, during the past six months, addressed every issue today affecting international peace and security. We have done that in a wonderful spirit of mutual respect and compromise, understanding and camaraderie. I thank all delegations for the courtesy they have extended to me. I also thank the members of the Secretariat at all levels, who have been just wonderful.

Your presidency, Sir, has been of a quality that we all know very well and about which we have spoken before in the consultation room; it has been of the highest standard, and you have set extremely high standards for us all — and have kept us all very busy as well. But the highlight of your presidency was the appointment of the Secretary-General. We are glad that the Secretary-General is present at this wrap-up meeting. I congratulate him very warmly.

I thank you, Mr. President, and I thank all my other colleagues.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his gracious presence and for his flexibility, on a very busy day, in adjusting his timetable to our timetable. We had been in the consultation room, and we never

know when we will come out of it. I thank him for waiting for us, and for coming down at the right moment. We appreciate his presence; I think it gives us a strong boost in holding this kind of wrap-up. We look forward to hearing his views about our views.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): Mr. President, I have prepared quite a long statement addressing various aspects of our work under your leadership this month. But, conscious of the time constraints, I will try to brief, and will touch on only a few of the most important issues.

It has in fact been a remarkable month in many respects. It has been remarkable, first and foremost, in terms of the impact of our decisions on the future work of the entire Organization. It has been remarkable also in terms of the efficiency and professionalism demonstrated by you, Sir, and by your excellent team in managing the heavy schedule of meetings and consultations, combined with a mission to Kosovo, and in steering our work towards effective results. You have achieved practically everything that we had expected from your presidency, and we commend you for your perseverance and resoluteness.

Among the decisions with which the Bangladeshi presidency will be associated is, first and foremost, the Council's recommendation to the General Assembly regarding the reappointment of the Secretary-General. It was an easy decision for all of us: the candidature of Mr. Kofi Annan can hardly be challenged, after all. Yet your boldness in taking that decision forward, Sir, deserves our praise and support. Let me take this opportunity to convey Ukraine's warmest congratulations to Mr. Kofi Annan on his appointment as Secretary-General for a second term.

We would also like to thank the Bangladeshi presidency for taking the initiative to hold an important debate on conflict prevention. The significant number of participants in that debate testifies to the keen interest in that meeting on the part of States Members of the United Nations. We are grateful also for the submission of the draft resolution that followed the debate, which provides a very good basis for further work.

The adoption of resolution 1353 (2001), on the basis of the four months of activity of the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations in examining ways to strengthen cooperation among the Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat, should be seen as yet another achievement of the Security Council in June. We commend Ambassador Ward of Jamaica for his leadership, and all the members of the Working Group for their efforts in preparing the draft resolution.

Let me say a couple of words on the issue of the communication of Council decisions. Although it took quite a long time — more than a year, in fact — your determination, Sir, has been rewarded with a note issued today regarding the communication of the Council's decisions. We consider this a clear demonstration of your country's commitment to improving the working methods and transparency of the Council.

Finally, Sir, I welcome the initiative to hold wrap-up meetings. My country has always favoured the idea of holding a wrap-up meeting at the end of a presidency, and your initiative in holding an open wrap-up meeting deserves our full support. We hope that this will be continued in the future.

Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*) I have so many scruples with regard to taking the floor at such a late hour that I have voluntarily reduced my statement to three minutes.

First of all, I would like to extend to you, as well as to your delegation, all the congratulations of the Tunisian delegation on the outstanding way in which you were able to guide the work of the Council during this month, a month rich in activity and marked by the consideration of a great number of important subjects with telling results. You just summarized all of the items which the Council considered this month, be they African, Saharan or Balkan. An enormous effort was made by all delegations, who sometimes went on site, so there is not need to reiterate.

I merely would like to limit this intervention to two points. The first is that the Council gave its attention throughout the last few weeks to the question of the oil-for-food programme and the Kuwaiti property. The Iraq question in the same way was the subject of a very important Security Council debate, in which we were able to take full account of the interest Member States of our Organization take in this subject. It came at a time after the earlier debate which the Council held in March 2000, also, incidently, under your presidence, Sir, on the humanitarian question in Iraq. The debate, which the Council has just held, will promote dialogue and transparency in dealing with

issues before the Council, in addition to the intensive consultations carried out by the Council on the proposals before it. Our major object remains that of putting an end to the sufferings of the Iraqi people by doing away with and lifting as soon as possible the sanctions against Iraq.

The second point is that the debate on the prevention of conflicts, which took place when the important report to the Secretary-General on this issue was presented, inspired genuine interest on the part of Member States. The subject of the prevention of conflicts lies at the heart of the responsibilities of our Organization. It should receive sustained attention from the international community in order to give it its proper role in the areas of peace and development in the light of its link to peace-building, as was emphasized by the Council in its presidential statement, adopted, as you will recall, in February under the presidency of Tunisia. It is better to prevent than to have to intervene later when it is too expensive on both the humanitarian and financial levels.

The month of June was also an important occasion for my country to become a co-sponsor of the Council's resolution recommending to the General Assembly the reappointment of Mr. Kofi Annan as Secretary-General of our Organization. On behalf of my country and my delegation, we would like to reiterate to him our full support and wish him all success at a time when our world, which is undergoing such great changes, needs the United Nations so badly.

Finally, allow me to voice our best wishes to our colleague and brother, Ambassador Neewoor.

Mr. Cooney (Ireland): First of all I'd like to say what a pleasure it was to have the Secretary-General here with us on what is clearly his day. Secondly, to thank you for your dynamic and courteous leadership of the Council during this month and for the very effective work of your team. We welcome today's wrap-up discussion. We think this is a useful initiative, not necessarily for the end of every month, but periodically it does do us well to reflect on our work, and in that spirit I would just like to pick up a couple of highlights of the month, which I feel have particular implications for the work of the Council.

The first was the mission to Kosovo, which was clearly a considerable success and, I think, underlined the usefulness of these Security Council missions. Preparation of these missions is particularly important, and I was privileged enough to participate in the preparation of the visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Great Lakes Mission, at Pocantico, and I certainly feel that there is a role for Pocantico-style meetings. As I've said before, they don't have to take place outside Headquarters, but if this kind of meeting involving the Secretary-General and a wider range of people in a kind of private environment could take place more often, I think it would make a significant contribution.

On conflict resolution, I think the Secretary-General's report offered a challenge to the entire United Nations system and the Member States and we look forward to the General Assembly debate and to discussing the draft resolution prepared by Bangladesh. This brings home, I think, the importance of following up on the discussions in the Security Council, and indeed of monitoring the follow-up.

On the resolution on the relations with troop contributors, I think this was a very good initiative, a very good piece of work by the working group, very ably chaired by Ambassador Ward, but we do feel we can go further. We are looking forward to discussing the proposal put forward by the six troop-contributing countries. Again, the lesson we would draw here is how important it is to reinforce the sense of involvement of troop contributors in the decision-making on peacekeeping operations.

On the Great Lakes and Burundi, we are coming up to interesting times here because we are working now to develop a relationship between the Security Council and regional organizations and initiatives. It is clear that, while that Security Council is keen to encourage and support these initiatives, it does not want to be seen to impose solutions. The problem we face as a result is that if and when things go wrong, the Security Council or the United Nations is going to a certain extent be blamed and will be invited to pick up the pieces. So it will be useful in our discussions over the next month in this area to reflect on this relationship and how it can evolve.

Finally, on Western Sahara, we adopted a resolution this morning that clearly offers a change of tack in the policy to date, and it may be that the next time the Secretary-General reports to us we might want to reflect on whether to have an open discussion on the Western Sahara. In terms of procedure, I would pick up on the point that was raised by Singapore. We feel that

the Group of Friends is a very valuable instrument in terms of bringing in the views of Members of the Organization who are not members of the Security Council, but we do feel, as I have said before, that these views should be shared, and the work should take place with all 15 members of the Council so that we all come to the resolution with the same sense of ownership and same sense of having an input into the resolution.

Mr. Levitte: (France) (*spoke in French*) Given the hour, I too will be very brief. Bravo, Mr. President, bravo to you, bravo to your entire delegation. You made us work a lot during the month of June, but above all, you made us work effectively, and that is due to your talent. Just one example for today was the resolution on the Western Sahara, which is the very delicate balancing point which we were able all together to find, thanks to you and thanks to your last proposal this morning, which allowed us to meet here, as David Cooney said, at an important time.

It has very often been said that the Security Council is slow or indeed even lags behind events. I think that from that point of view we are making progress; thanks to you we even sometimes manage to get ahead of our timetable, for we have recommended a second term of office for our favourite Secretary-General six months ahead of the official timetable.

I agree with David Cooney when he suggests new meetings — not necessarily at Pocantico but certainly of the brainstorming-type — not just to prepare for the coming event, but also to ensure regular follow up for those issues that deserve that. I am referring to Burundi, which was also referred to by Christine Lee. I am also thinking of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and several other items which merit having the Council return to them at least once a month and taking all the time necessary for real deliberations with the Secretary-General, the Secretariat and all those who can assist us in properly defining the stages, the necessary initiatives and the steps to be taken.

I think that every time we consider the timetable of the coming month, we should all reserve a few hours for one or two issues in order to think together about appropriate initiatives.

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): Under your presidency, Sir, the Security Council certainly tackled a number of difficult issues. Despite the tremendous efforts of your team, there are issues that are not easily resolved. One such issue is the sanctions regime against Iraq and all the issues related to that situation. There are differing views on the way forward on this issue, and the Council will continue to grapple with them over the next few days of your presidency and perhaps into the presidency of Ambassador Wang Yingfan. He probably will prefer for us to agree before we get there.

Having had an open debate and having listened to the views of non-members of the Security Council, including the views of Iraq, the onus is now on the Council to clearly define the way forward to find a resolution of all outstanding issues with respect to Iraq. I dare say, to be successful the Council will have to put the interests of the international community ahead of national interests. Far too often the latter has overshadowed our work, in particular on this issue.

On the issue of Western Sahara, the Council adopted resolution 1359 (2001) earlier today in response to the recommendations of the Secretary-General and his personal envoy. That too proved to be a very difficult issue. But we were able to resolve it. And while allowing for new approaches to settling the political issues, the Council, in its wisdom, ensured that the principles for which it and the United Nations stand are preserved, in particular that the people of Western Sahara will not be denied the opportunity to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination. I agree with Ambassador Cooney on the idea of an open debate at some time in the future on Western Sahara.

As you have indicated, Sir, the Security Council acted in a decidedly comprehensive manner in seeking to improve the relationships between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries. However, despite the good faith effort of the Council to address the most critical issues of consultation and decision-making and to improve peacekeeping operations, many troop-contributing countries are not fully satisfied, and we will have to continue our work in this area.

I thank colleagues for the statements made with respect to my leadership of the working group, and I look forward to continued cooperation as we tackle the more difficult issues ahead. During the month we considered the very well prepared report of the Secretary-General on conflict prevention. Undoubtedly, our work will continue with consideration of the draft resolution proposed by your presidency. Beyond that, however, the Security Council must become proactive

in conflict prevention and give full support to the Secretary-General in building the capacity of the Secretariat to carry out effective conflict prevention. I agree with the statements of Ambassadors Valdivieso and Lavrov with respect to dealing with other matters during consultations of the whole. I am sure that Ambassador Wang Yingfan has taken note of these concerns, and we will receive some relief in July.

My colleague of Singapore, Minister Lee, raised a number of important issues, which should be further discussed in the Council. I hope we are afforded an opportunity to do so. On one of the issues — the working of the Friends Group — I share the views expressed by Minister Lee and Ambassador Cooney.

I would like to end by extending my warmest congratulations to you, Mr. President, and to your team. I pay a special tribute to your coordinator for the wonderful work and the tremendous zeal that your delegation has put into the workings of the Security Council.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China)(*spoke in Chinese*): Given the lateness of the hour, I would like to associate myself with the statements and assessments on this month's work given by other colleagues.

I wish to touch on one point regarding the Council's working methods concerning the month of June. During the month of June, Ambassador Greenstock held a lunch party and carried out informal discussions on improving the Council's working methods of the Council. I am very glad to note that a lunch party will also be held in the month of July, and Ambassador Mahbubani is going to host that lunch party.

We had a very heavy schedule in the month of June. We debated several issues. With regard to enhancing transparency, I must say that we did that very well for the month June. However, we still have expectations about other issues. We need more time to prepare for the issues to be discussed, so that we may have a discussion of the items and highlight our greatest concerns.

Ambassador Levitte mentioned that follow-up actions or discussions need to be taken. There is a problem with how to schedule the work for a given month. I do not think it is possible to work from early morning late into the night, from Monday through Friday. Therefore, we must address this question. I would like to invite all members to give proper thought to this problem and to attend the informal consultations to be hosted by Ambassador Mahbubani.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): I am speaking in an interactive mode, if you like, so I will be very brief. But firstly, congratulations to you, Sir, and to your team for the way in which you have handled the presidency this month.

I would like to make two and a half quick points. Firstly, I want to take up the point made by David Cooney and Jean-David Levitte about the preparation of Security Council missions. I think this is indeed very important. The way in which each mission is prepared will depend to a certain degree on what it is doing and where it is going. But I would simply say that from my own experience on the second East Timor mission, we found it very valuable indeed to have a number of meetings before we left, not only with Council members, but also with troop-contributors and — this will be related to my second point — with other interested parties who feel they have views to convey about the particular situation, be they United Nations agencies or perhaps even non-governmental organizations, as the situation demands.

So, I thoroughly agree with the importance of the point. I simply hope we won't limit ourselves to the Pocantico Hills style meetings, which were very useful, but I think we need to be flexible and imaginative about how we take this forward.

Secondly, on the working group on peacekeeping: I think this has been a very valuable innovation, and I would like to add to the avalanche of congratulations to Curtis Ward. We are looking forward to the review of the arrangements for relations with troop contributors in six months time. As we said before the resolution was adopted, we will have some ideas of our own to suggest. In the meantime, in our view, there is plenty of other work for the working group to be doing, and I look forward to seeing a significant expansion of its agenda over the coming months. There are some big issues out there and we must stress them.

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): I would be remiss if I did not mention the valuable work that Matthew Taylor of the United Kingdom Mission provided to the working group, and I understand that he is leaving. I hope I have an opportunity to say this to him directly, but I will ask Ambassador Eldon to convey to him this sincere appreciation on the part of the Chair of the

working group and all the members of the working group for the valuable work of Matthew Taylor of the United Kingdom Mission.

The President: The Council joins you in this. I have not said it individually, but let me convey to all of you my very sincere thanks on my behalf and on behalf of the Bangladesh Security Council team, and convey how grateful we are for your very gracious words. I think they were overwhelming. We in the Bangladesh team are immensely grateful to all of you for facilitating the discharge of our responsibility of the Council presidency. We do not know how to thank you for all the trust, support and cooperation you have given us in the discharge of our responsibility.

From the comments that have been made, we will prepare a compendium, gleaned from the statements made today, and perhaps circulate it to all of you. It will be a point for future work, in order to carry forward the very valuable comments we have received here. I look forward to the important presidency of Ambassador Wang, coming up next month. I believe all of you will join in conveying to him our best wishes and our full commitment of support to him and his team in the discharge of the responsibility for the month of July. Since this will be the last public meeting under the Bangladesh presidency, I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks. If we have an oil-for-food resolution tomorrow, we can adopt it. I take this opportunity to express my sincerest thanks to the Secretariat, Mr. Stephanides and his team, to the Conference Services, who have been very effective and very supportive, to the interpreters, very sincerely, for bearing with us, and to all the men and women who worked day and night, supporting the work of the Council.

I will also add a special word of thanks to the security team, who worked with us throughout the period. With those words, I would like to thank all of you again, and I promise my friends from the broader membership of the United Nations that the next debate here for the wrap-up will include an opportunity for the others to speak as well. I think I can express that hope on behalf of all of us.

The meeting rose at 2:00 p.m.